

SECRET
THE SUITCASE

The Greyhound bus, which was due in Pittsburgh at 2:30 on the morning of November 17th, stood on the side of the road in total darkness. The night was cold and clear, the snow which had fallen for a few minutes in the early afternoon of the preceding day had been blown like dust into the hollows of the surrounding fields.

Acting on the orders of the driver, the passengers had pulled down the shades beside their seats but the door of the bus was open so the people could breath something beside tobacco smoke. Conversation had stopped half an hour before. A man could be heard snoring, a woman sighed, a soldier whispered something in the ear of a cadaverous girl who had gotten on at McKeesport.

Four men stood on the shoulder of the road beside the open door of the bus. They were tired and apprehensive. Their voices sounded small in the cold darkness.

"What was the name of that last town, driver?"

"Wilmerding, Wilmerding. I told you that before. Goddamit, we could be in Pittsburgh in twenty minutes if .."

The driver stepped to the door of the bus and looked in. Through the gloom he could see the illuminated dial of a portable radio. It belonged to a fat woman who had been bragging in a loud unpleasant voice about her two sons in the Navy.

"Hey, lady," said the driver, "have you got anything more out of that thing?"

"No. Not a thing." The voice was hoarse.

Just as the driver turned wearily away, there was a slight gust of wind coming over the Alleghenies to the east and on the wind there came a soft high moan that froze the men where they were standing beside the bus.

"J... I think" one whispered.

"They're really"

All four of the men opened their mouths and breathed lightly in order to hear better. Suddenly the driver looked into the bus and shouted:

"Put out those cigarettes."

The order was obeyed instantly even by the people who knew that it was senseless, and the fat woman said something that sounded like:

"Jesus - Mary an' Jose -"

The four men looked at the eastern sky, not really expecting to see anything and reluctant to appear concerned. They had been told that it might happen and the air raid regulation from the second world war had been republished. Only the man who was sitting in the rear of the bus and who had seen Nagasaki in 1945 had a very clear idea of what it might really be like.

The driver looked at the dial of the portable radio again. Forty minutes ago the thing had announced the approach of enemy planes and then gone into cosmic silence. It was the silence that pervaded the whole empty landscape; it was a silence that had existed since the beginning of time through which there now came more clearly the rushing sound of jet motors far above.

One of the two men who had not yet spoken turned to figure who was leaning against the mud guard and asked:

"Has it got six or eight motors?"

The only answer was a shrug of the shoulders and at that moment the four men heard other sounds coming out of the northwest.

"Those must be our jets," the driver guessed.

"Yeah ..."

The sounds converged overhead. A faint whirring that might have been machine guns could be heard.

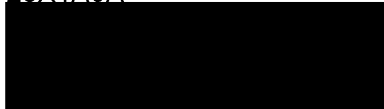
"I hope they get the sons of .."

Everybody looked up, hoping to see the flash of an exploding bomber. But there was no flash and the man beside the mud guard knew that it was too late.

He looked toward Pittsburgh. It would be interesting to see -- very interesting if you didn't think about it. For a moment more the night was merely another winter night in the mountains. And then it happened: the blinding titanic flash hung on for what seemed an incredible length of time accompanied, after a short interval by a distended, growling roar of something more primitive, even than the hills. It was the stuff of which the hills were made -- atoms ripping themselves apart ... Through nearly shut eyes, the man by the mud guard could see the incandescent column rising above the city where machine tools, steel and armaments were made. And where, incidentally, tens of thousands of people were now dead or dying. The man thought about his brother and his wife or other's in their house at Sewickley where he had been going to spend the weekend. He would be there now if his car hadn't broken down. Suddenly he realized that most of the people had come out of the bus.

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SECRET

SECRET

- 2 -

"Holy God ..."

The fat woman began to scream hysterically.

The man beside the mud guard glanced at her with fury and contempt and then pushed his way through the crowd to where the driver was standing.

"You can't go in there now," he said.

The driver looked at him. "You mean the radiation?"

"Yes".

"Well, what am I going to do with these people?"

"Take them back to McKeesport. Everybody in Pittsburgh that can move will be trying to get away, so you better hurry up."

"I'll take them back to Wilmerding," said the driver. "I want to get rid of them".

"That's OK with me, but you're going to take me to Harrisburg afterwards or rather Mechanicsburg which is about 20 miles this side, and fast."

"Yeah?" exclaimed the driver. "And who in the hell do you think you are?"

"I'll show you," the man replied as he fumbled in his hip pocket for his identification papers.

* * * * *

It was still dark when the bus, empty save for the driver and the man, stopped in front of the First National Bank of Mechanicsburg, Pa.

"Is this OK?" the driver asked, and then added: "Sir?" He had been a Marine in the last war.

"Yes. But you wait - and shut up, I've got to think."

James Pierpont Randall McGillicuddy III wanted to get himself oriented before he moved again. War Plans for the Central Intelligence Agency had recognized the value of decentralization. This concept was based on the unpleasant supposition that the top brass of the Government might be liquidated and with it the several hundred tons of matter which CIA had accumulated, for better or for worse, in its file cabinets. It was also assumed that the initial attack on the North American Continent would be air borne and that the U. S. Air Force would, in the event of an attack, be in most immediate need of such services as McGillicuddy and his kind were able to render. And McGillicuddy was of a special kind.

Because it was assumed that the Air Force might require estimates of such CIA personnel as might survive, James and 42 other foreign affairs analysts in the Office of Research and Estimates had been trained during the preceding six months in the mores, morals and materiel of the Number One Enemy. Not that James was very happy about this. He had often wished that the Russians had said more and talked less since World War II, but he recognized that he could not change the intellectual habits of a nation that had always believed in a "defense in depth".

Sitting there in the darkness, with the catastrophe of Pittsburgh immediately behind him, and God only knew what was in front, McGillicuddy was not concerned with the intentions of the Red Army, or the Red Air Force. He did not feel particularly elated that he was alive. Rather, his mind was concerned with the steps he should take in the next few hours. And in that connection, he was irritated that his rank had not entitled him to a fuller knowledge of the war plans of his agency.

High authority had considered it enough that he be told that his assignment, once the bombs fell, would be in the north eastern states. Having been born in Jersey City and educated at Harvard, it was sensible for the brass to assume that he might be more useful in this area. But it had also been hinted that the main cache of CIA information was not in the north eastern but in the south western part of the country. McGillicuddy whose mind had acquired the habit of dire suspicion since he left the University, believed that the stuff was somewhere, in a desert in New Mexico.

His agency had told him, however, that there was such a thing as the CIA Emergency Field Kit that was designed to tide the men of his group over the first month or two after the bombs fell. Unfortunately, the lectures on the field kit and its uses were to have begun on Monday of the following week; fortunately, on the other hand, the men had been required to memorize the names and the location of 26 small town banks north of Washington and east of the Ohio State line. All these banks were outside the number one priority target areas and according to the directive there was in each and every one a Field Kit. The contents of which were especially suitable to the recent occasion. Because he had a good memory, McGillicuddy was now standing in front of the First National Bank of Mechanicsburg, Pa., wondering who was the President of the institution and where he lived. Just as he noticed that the eastern sky was beginning to light up, a door across the street between an A & P and a state liquor store opened and a woman emerged. James sprang into action across the squeaking snow and as he did so, he emitted those wordless sounds which young men use to attract the attention of women toward whom they entertain only the most impersonal intentions. These had the desired

SECRET

SECRET

effect. The woman wheeled sharply around and said: "Yes".

"Will you tell me," he asked, "The name of the President of that bank over there?"

The woman looked at him for a moment and he added: "This has to do with the national defense."

"His name is Herman Briedenbaugh" she replied.

"Where does he live?"

"Out on Monroe Street. You'll have to look it up in the telephone book."

The edge of the sun was showing when the President of the First National opened the front door of his house and admitted the CIA man. McGillicuddy introduced himself and showed his identification card.

Mr. Briedenbaugh examined the papers, looked thoughtfully at his visitor and said: "I'll dress. Have a chair in the parlor."

McGillicuddy was glad to sit down. The clock in the hall ticked slowly. James looked at his wrist watch. It was five minutes to seven. The room grew lighter and James could hear a voice on the floor above. It did not seem to matter so he lit a cigarette and relaxed. The room was cold and after a while the man rose and went to the window. As he was standing there, the clock struck the half hour and James turned angrily from the window, went to the foot of the stairs in the front hall and called: "Mr. Briedenbaugh".

That gentleman presently came downstairs fully dressed and while he was still in motion he said: "Mr. McGillicuddy, I've been trying without success to reach your agency in Washington. It seems that the lines are open as far as Alexandria but that the Executive exchange in the District is out of commission."

"Oh?" James grunted. So they had hit Washington too. There seemed no point in making a comment.

"Yes", his companion continued, "it isn't good." He looked deeply troubled and then, turning to the matter in hand, he said: "Mr. McGillicuddy, I handled this matter you're interested in personally and I was told that it was of the first importance. I was very much impressed by the manner of the man who contacted me. Now the simple fact is, I am very reluctant to hand this ... er ... box over to you without word from Washington."

James thought for a moment. Then he said: "I respect your sense of security, Mr. Briedenbaugh ... but may I ask whether you were told to follow that procedure?"

"Well, no ... but I was told that we would receive further instructions."

"And they did not arrive?"

"No ... no they did not".

"The attack came rather earlier in the year than we anticipated", James apologized "and to tell you the truth I am not familiar with the dissemination procedure in this instance. It strikes me as highly improbable however, that CIA would expect to clear these items through the Washington Office ... because it was anticipated that the capitol would be a primary target ... chiefly for morale purposes."

Mr. Briedenbaugh was listening attentively and beginning to be impressed.

"I will go further", McGillicuddy went on in a tone calculated to impress a bank president. "My own instructions about this box are incomplete. I believe that the plan to put out these boxes was under consideration ever since the summer of 1948 but the material was only gotten together in the last three months. I know what the box contains in a general way."

Mr. Briedenbaugh looked out of the window and said: "This is very awkward".

"I've got to have that box", James said firmly but quietly.

"Do you think", the old gentleman asked, "that there might be an identification of you in it? Is that possible?"

By God, McGillicuddy thought, he's not stupid. And then: "That might very well be".

Mr. Briedenbaugh rose saying: "Well, we'll have a look at it ... but I'm going to take two of our guards along ... I'm sure you will understand."

McGillicuddy unbuttoned his overcoat. "I suggest", he said "that you satisfy yourself that I am not armed."

Mr. Briedenbaugh hesitated for a moment and then complied with the suggestion, nodded and lead the way out of the room. "I may have seen too many movies", he remarked as they were leaving the house. James laughed: "no ... actually, I think you are quite right and I respect you for it."

At ten minutes to eight a rather worn brown leather suitcase stood on a table in the vault of the First National Bank. The lock was sealed with wire and a piece of lead.

"I've got to break the lock", James said.

"Go ahead", Mr. Briedenbaugh answered and then to one of the guards, "Murphy get your clippers and cut this wire."

"And give me a screw driver, if you have one", James added.

In five minutes the case was open and the men were looking at a steel box.

SECRET

SECRET

"It is to suppose that you know the combination of this lock," Mr. Briedenbaugh

"No," James said.

"Then we'll have to break it," the old man remarked. "Here Murphy."

It was a tough job but finally the box was forced. At that point, McGillicuddy told Briedenbaugh that box contains top secret documents and you have no right to see them. On the other hand you will not surrender it to me unless you are satisfied that I am entitled to have them. I suggest this: if there is an identification system in this situation, it will be on top of the material. It has occurred to me that if we filled out cards which had our signatures, photographs and finger prints, I want you to see if there may not be photographic copies of those cards, perhaps in a machine sheet of paper. If there is such a thing, I wish you would hand it to me with- out a signature and I will show you that section that relates to me."

"That sounds reasonable," Mr. Briedenbaugh answered and opened the box. Presently he was holding a white envelope in his hand. He read: "Security Regulations" and asked: "Shall I open it."

"Let me do that," James said "but you watch."

The envelope contained three sheets of onion skin paper covered with fine printing. It also contained a sheet of photographic paper on which sixteen identification cards were reproduced in half size. Presently McGillicuddy found himself confronted with his own picture in miniature. He folded the paper so that only this picture could be seen and showed it to Mr. Briedenbaugh.

The old man nodded. "Very well," he said. "Now what can we do for you?"

"Let me use your telephone."

As he picked up the instrument in the President's private office, McGillicuddy felt as though he had gotten off a sand bar.

He said to the operator: "I want to talk with the air intelligence officer at the 11th Air Force Command in Harrisburg. This is urgent." A few minutes later, he was saying: "I want to talk with the duty officer. My name is McGillicuddy, from Central Intelligence in Washington."

Soon a tense voice said: "Yes, what is it?"

McGillicuddy identified himself and added: "I have instructions to report to Major General Bong."

"Where are you?"

"In Mechanicsburg."

"Have you got transportation?"

"Yes."

"Then get over here, McGonigal, we can put you to work ... if you're what you say you are."

The driver of the bus was asleep, his face a grayish purple. James shook the man's shoulder. When the eyes opened, McGillicuddy said: "OK, you've done enough for tonight. I'm much obliged to you. It was important or I wouldn't have asked you to help. But I've got a car now and you might as well go home."

The man looked up and asked: "Where are you going now?"

"Harrisburg. Eleventh Air Force Headquarters."

"Oh Christ. I'll take you. I won't be driving this bus for a few years and we might as well get some use out of it. Come on let's finish the job."

James nodded. He was feeling better. The American people were all right.

It was a concrete road and the bus was doing better than sixty. Things had gone quite well; at least he had been able to conform to the first part of his instructions: "Pick up Emergency Kit and proceed to nearest Air Force Command." McGillicuddy shut his eyes and the next thing he knew he was looking into the red face of a sentry. An hour later he was sitting across the desk from Colonel Hodiak, A-2, General Bong's A-2.

"I still don't quite understand what you're supposed to be doing for us."

"Look, Colonel," James said, "This box contains thirty pounds of sixteen millimeter microfilm. That adds up to several hundred thousand pages of confidential, secret and top secret documents. As I have just read to you, it assumes that the Encyclopedia Britanica will be available, it assumes that all sorts of unrestricted charts and navigational material will be available. This stuff is the information we need for replying to the present attack. You can see for yourself that it's all indexed under the

SECRET

SECRET

Basic Intelligence plan of the Army. I have been trained especially to handle this job. No, Goddamit, I will not turn it over to you."

"Well, you're just another of the ivory tower boys. What we need now is operational intelligence, we have to fight this war, not fiddle around with this kind of stuff."

"I'm sorry," McGillicuddy repeated, "but I can't argue the case. I want to see the General."

"I doubt very much that he has time to see you," the Colonel answered angrily.

"Well, under my instructions I've got to make the effort."

The General turned out to be very busy indeed; but the General was one of those officers who could be very busy without showing it.

"Ah, Mr. McGillicuddy" he said "how's your director. Know him in Paris after the last war?"

"I don't know, sir. I tried to reach Washington early this morning but couldn't make it."

"Not surprised. They hit Washington pretty hard. It's a mess. Just had a reconnaissance report. Even the Pentagon, it is still standing but there's nothing inside it."

"Anything left of my shop?" James asked.

"Let's see." The General answered and pushed a button. A major came to the door.

"Say Jamison," the General drawled "have they got those areals of north west Washington developed?"

"Yes sir, they just came in ... but they're still wet."

"Bring 'em in."

A minute later they were bending over the picture, the General squinting through a magnifying glass. "Where was CIA?" he asked.

"Between the brewery and the roller skating rink" James answered. "Down there by the river near the Lincoln Memorial."

"Um," said the General, looking closely. "Too bad."

Jamison also looked and suddenly the dark blot on the photograph which covered the area where the M and Q buildings had stood became more real to him than the whole city of Pittsburgh. Of course, it didn't mean that they were all dead but Iris Fendragon had been on the night shift in Eastern Europe and it was quite possible that Iris Fendragon had ceased to exist. Next in order of importance came Pettigrew and Moray. They'd been on the job at all hours. Andrews too, and all those damned IBM machines of his on the first floor.

"I think," the General was saying that we ought to talk to the Strategic Air Command in Salinas. Frankly I haven't any instructions covering you and I have the impression that what you have there is going to be of use to the Joint Chiefs ... if we can find any. You've got the whole industrial picture of the USSR you say, air, land and sea dispositions as of 23 days ago, an estimate of the situation on the same date ... that was to be revised once a month, you said, didn't you?"

"Yes, General. I haven't had time to look at this one in detail but it's a fairly formidable document ... I notice that there are cross references to the material on the films."

The phone rang... The General listened carefully and then said: "Very well. Go ahead. They're getting the rest of the other jets ready at the Depot."

He thought for a moment and nodded to himself. Then turning to McGillicuddy, he said: "I'm going to let Jamison take care of you. Jamison, let Mr. McGillicuddy talk to Harper out at Salinas; I think that they'll want him out there."

"Yes sir."

Communications to Salinas was by voice radio. The call got through very quickly under the Major's urging. Presently, Jamison turned. "They've got a report of McGillicuddy. It says that the Director of your outfit called a meeting last night of the key men in CIA at his home and that they were all caught."

"Jesus," McGillicuddy exclaimed, feeling suddenly alone.

Jamison put his hand over the transmitter and said: "You're the first CIA man they've heard from out there. They think maybe you are the only one of your team that was out of Washington when the bombs fell."

"It could be" ... McGillicuddy replied.

"They also say that you'd better get out to Salinas. That's U.S. Air Force Headquarters until further notice. And they're talking about having some people and stuff

SECRET

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- 6 -

from your agency out there ... they've been setting up a file room underground ... but they're not intelligence people. Do you want to go?"

McGillivuddy nodded, and Jamison said into the telephone: "I'll send him out on the next plane ... that will be at three thirty our time."

Now he turned to his caller: "Let's see, you've got an hour and a half. You look bushed. Want to lie down for a while?"

"No, thanks. I want to have a look at this estimate here ... it's the last and only one they ever put out ... I hope to God it's specific ... and I want to see what this box contains. I may have to live out of it for the next few months so far as my work is concerned and it's supposed to have everything required to meet this emergency. We'll call it an emergency for want of a better word."

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

TO		INITIALS	DATE
1	[REDACTED] ICAPS		
2			
3			
4			
5			
FROM		INITIALS	DATE
1	AD/OCD	[REDACTED]	
2			
3			

☐ APPROVAL ☐ INFORMATION ☐ SIGNATURE
☐ ACTION ☐ DIRECT REPLY ☐ RETURN
☐ COMMENT ☐ PREPARATION OF REPLY ☐ DISPATCH
☐ CONCURRENCE ☐ RECOMMENDATION ☐ FILE

REMARKS: Herewith a narrative attempt, by a talented
ORE analyst who prefers to remain anonymous,
to put the Vital Records Committee in a
proper frame of mind for its mission.

J. Andrews

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